

The Mustang Monthly

Volume II, Issue 8

August 2006

S1 Pat on the Back Postings!

Congratulations to Our Promotees through 1 September

B Co

CW3 Thomas

SGT Sayakom

C Co

SGT Pollock

D Co

SFC Strange

SPC Bailey

SPC Mothchell

SPC Steams

SPC Pollford

SPC Cash

SPC Hickman

PFC Ross

Continued on the back page...

From the Commander's Desk

Dear Mustang Family,

I was delightfully surprised from the start upon arrival here in Taji. For a battalion that underwent a change in leadership on more than one occasion, the soldiers of 2-4 appear to have not missed a beat. Our battalion is filled with professional soldiers who know their jobs and do them well.

Understandably most of you are probably more interested in when we are coming home and how soon you can head to see family and friends on block leave. At this point, I can tell you that block leave will be split into two groups. Charlie Company will return home around the first

part of October and undergo a short reintegration period prior to going on leave the middle of October thru the middle of November. The remainder of the battalion will return near the beginning of November and will go on leave from the beginning of December thru the beginning of January. For planning purposes, I recommend not locking in hotel or airline reservations until you hear definitively from your spouse or significant other due to the changing situation in combat.

While everyone is looking forward to coming home, our group is remaining focused on the mission at hand, which is

vital to the success of the coalition and 4th ID. You can be proud of the work accomplished over here. Whether it is MEDEVAC, moving cargo and personnel, maintaining vehicles and aircraft or manning the phones, every soldier has a role to play and they are all heroes!

We hope to see everyone soon,

LTC David Fleckenstein

From the CSMs Desk

Hello from Camp Taji. As the month of September begins, we start with a new commander. LTC Fleckenstein arrived to lead the battalion through the final months of deployment. Everyone has either been or is finishing up their environmental leave, and we are all anx-

iously looking forward to our return to Ft. Hood. Although the soldiers remain focused on the mission at hand, it is hard not to look forward, and we do so, with much anticipation. Everyone is looking forward to redeployment. To taking some time for themselves and their families, and slowing down from the year long

marathon.

The next couple of months will probably be some of our busiest, with the current mission, redeployment, integration, leave and the holidays. But we look forward to it, and expect it will go by quickly.

In all that has occurred over the last ten months, the thing that stands out as the

CSMs Desk cont...

greatest support for the troops, is the families and loved ones who have remained steadfast with letters, cards, packages, e-mails and on-line chats. Even now, soldiers eagerly anticipate mail delivery, in the hopes of receiving anything. And much to the soldiers credit and the families and loved ones who are so generous, many of the care packages are shared.

Your soldiers have done extremely well, and you can and should be proud of all they have accomplished.

CSM Laura L. Pedices



From the Blackjack Card Table

Hello Blackjack Families-

The summer has ended back home and we would like to offer our congratulations to all the Blackjack kids who have returned to school this month. Good luck with your studies, we know that you will all do very well this school year! Everything is going well with the

...here in Iraq the excruciating heat keeps us all in search of a place to cool off...

to the day when we get to step on the plane and head home. Even though summer has ended in Texas, here in Iraq the excruciating heat keeps us all in search of a place to

Blackjacks at Camp Taji as we continue to move ever closer

cool off as we continue to drive on with our missions supporting the division, flying more than 500 hours this month. We also completed the company's mid-tour leave program as the last few Soldiers headed for home this month. The two weeks goes fast, but it's definitely a great break from the desert!

As we near the end of our deployment I would like to take this opportunity to look back at all the tremendous support that we have received from the families back home. Through the year, everything that the families have given to the company has been the fuel that we have used to sustain ourselves. There are no words to express our gratitude, all I can say is a heartfelt thank you for everything.

We are picking up the pace here and before you know it we'll be running into that gym. Until then, Good Luck and God Bless.

1SG Mark Grumbach
Blackjack 07

CPT John Miller
Blackjack 06



From The Clydesdale Stables

Greetings to all the Clydesdale Families from Camp Taji! The close of August brings us another day closer to home and another thousand pallets moved for the Ivy Division here in Iraq. The Soldiers and officers of Bravo Company continue to strive and achieve excellence each night with their enormous efforts to keep hundreds of other Soldiers safely off the roads of Iraq. I am terribly proud of them, as I know all of you are as well.

Their untiring dedication was recognized this month by one of our biggest cus-



went several anxiety filled nights under intense scrutiny from our Instructor Pilots, but they came through with flying colors. Congratulations to Ross and Steve and their families on their enormous accomplishment!

August brought another momentous event to the Clydesdales with the arrival of the new Battalion Commander. In late August, LTC David Fleckenstein, a CH-47 Pilot by trade, joined the

tomers. On 18 August, COL Perna from the Sustainment Brigade came to the Bravo Company area to show his appreciation to your loved ones with an inspiring speech of thanks and the presentation of his Brigade coin to each and every Clydesdale!

In my first month with the company, the Clydesdales have had much to celebrate. First, we welcomed two new Non Commissioned Officers to the Corps on 1 August

with promotions to Sergeant for Jace Pedersen and Scott Swanberg. These promotions

were well earned and I have no doubt they will continue to impress in the future with their example and leadership. Congratulations to these brand new NCOs and their families! Additionally, on 1 August, one of our new platoon leaders celebrated his very first promotion in the Army with the step up to First Lieutenant. Congratulations to 1LT Matt Jones and his family!

More accolades are due this month for CW2 Ross Glidewell and CW2 Steve Farabaugh. Their hard work and dedication to duty were recognized this month with their nomination for and subsequent achievement of Night Vision Goggle Pilot in Command. They under-

“Hookers” as Mustang 06. I’m sure you all will join us

in welcoming him and his family to Fort Hood and the Battalion. His arrival marks the culmination of several months of sweeping changes in the Clydesdale family. Through it all, the Clydesdales have maintained their workhorse status and still show no signs of slowing down.

As always, we must give credit where it is due...without the sacrifices you all make everyday, we could not

celebrate so much success here. Our mission accomplishment is directly correlated to the support and tremendous efforts you all make to ensure the home fires keep right on burning. Thank you for your continuing love, thoughts, prayers and the goody boxes that continuously bring smiles and laughter to the Clydesdale team!

CLYDESDALES!

Sincerely,

CPT Sherri Sharpe

1SG Christian Whalen



From the MEDEVAC Launch

The End Is Near

Well Dustoff fans it is crunch time. The month of August is gone, September is here, and we



all know what that means. Although we are counting down the days, we are still going strong providing MEDEVAC coverage for the greater Baghdad area. This month alone we have flown 500 combat hours and evacuated 400 patients. This puts American Dustoff over 5000 combat hours and 4000 patients for the past deployment. This is a great achievement and we are all very proud of surpassing this mark.

The past

month everyone has been doing inventories of their equipment and it seems there is never enough time in the day to get it done. Plus, no one wants to be outside in the heat of the day lugging around equipment. It has been hot and sweaty work, but everyone seems ready to chip and help out since it is one step closer to our return

We also had three promotions and quite a few awards given out this month. Leroy Thompson was promoted from Chief Warrant Officer 2 to Chief Warrant Officer 3, Victor Avila was promoted from Corporal to Sergeant and Weldon Boyles was promoted from Specialist to Sergeant. Congratulation

guys on your hard work and well deserved promotion. CPT Corey Boudreau, CW2 Scott Rackley, CW2 AJ Liggins, SGT James Brown, and SGT Bradley Stevens all received the Sikorsky Rescue Award for their contributions to the rescue effort during the Hurricane Katrina aftermath in New Orleans. During their short time in New Orleans they conducted over 60 hoist missions. CPT John Tippet, CW2 Scott Rackley, SGT James Brown, and SSG Roger Kennedy all received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Taji Base

Iraqi Army Commander for donating their time and expertise to the Iraqi Army during a Mass Casualty exercise. During the exercise the crew taught the Iraqi Soldiers how to properly approach a MEDEVAC helicopter and how to properly load the patient into both types of airframe configurations that they might see.

Congratulations to all on you recent achievement. Everyone in American Dustoff is doing a great job and is keeping focused on the mission despite closing in on that

magical date. Have a dustoff day.

By 1LT David A. Hylander



From the Maverick Empire

Summer is in full swing this month and with temperatures on the flight line reaching 130 degrees it most certainly has not been a vacation. The mighty Mavericks continue to endure each day and accomplish the maintenance mission. Some days they battle the mid-day sun to complete repairs on the tired fleet of aircraft. The Mavericks always come through and

dropped a mission due to maintenance yet.

The maintenance platoon completed another successful phase maintenance inspection of a CH-47. The team led by SSG Douglas did an excellent job working while with our sister unit Bravo Company 404th. The phase had some challenge but

the battalion has not

SSG Douglas's team overcame them all to produce an outstanding final product. The team represented the company as true professionals; Great job! The phase team members were: SSG Douglas, SGT Selner, SGT Stewart, SGT Wadell, SGT Runyon, SPC Cardinal, SPC Schmill, SPC Yates, PFC Callazo, PFC Patterson and PV2 Lacosse.

The planning continues for redeployment; and many Soldiers in Delta Company are counting the days.

However, the missions are not letting up and we must continue to support the ever increasing flight hour program. These last few months will be a truly be a challenge. It will take long hours and lots of hard work but the end is finally in sight. We all look forward to being home soon.

Comings and goings: We received one new Soldier the month, PFC Stephen Colley from Headquarters. Delta Company welcomes PFC Colley.

This month the Maverick family endured some serious hardships. We extend our prayers to the Stayton and Dawson families. We wish speedy recoveries to both families. We also extend our condolences to the Pollard family our prayers are with you as well. All the Mavericks send home their love

and best wishes to family and friends. We will be home soon. We love and miss you all. Mavericks!

Birthday's this month
Happy Birthday Mavericks!

03 August
PV2 Brandon Lacosse

09 August
SPC William Browning

11 August
SPC Jimmy Leon

14 August
SPC Steven Luce

15 August
SSG Walter Anco

16 August
PFC Matthew Patterson

19 August
SPC Ricky Yates

24 August
Alex Runyon SGT

29 August
Ronald Swinyer SPC

29 August
Alfredo Cespedes SSG

29 August
Matthew Pollard PV2



From the Griffins' Den

Maintenance Platoon

Yet another month has come and gone and we are one step closer towards preparing to return. However, the spotlight is not on our departure, but staying focused on our mission and working hard to leave our footprint in the best possible condition for our replacements.

In line with that notion we have been keeping busy around the Mo-

tor Pool with the completion of 7 scheduled and 9 unscheduled maintenance jobs, as well as 3 welding jobs. I want to thank everyone for continuing to do a great job at maintaining a high level of support and always getting the job done. This month we were

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progress in their military
careers...*

also tasked to complete the installation of more vehicle upgrades for the M1114s. We completed a total of 16 of the Frag 5, Frag 2 and Frag 1 kits that are designed to provide the vehicle with more protection. This project is definitely one with the potential to save lives and we are proud to be a part of it. I am also

very proud to congratulate all 9 promotions. We are extremely honored when we can see our Soldiers progress in their military careers and know that they are ready to step up to the new challenges that will present themselves. I would also like to congratulate SPC Peters, SPC Cannon, SPC



Noble and PFC Baines. These Soldiers received recognition and awards for their welding endeavors; preparing the Battalion's containers for re-deployment. CW3 Betancourt also presented LTC McLean with a Warrant Officer's coin, recognizing him for his time, motivation and incredible leadership that he provided us during his tenure. Words cannot express the gratitude that we feel toward you and wish you well in

your future endeavors. Thanks again. And last, but certainly not least, to our loved ones, we love and miss you and will see you soon.

POL Platoon

Hot August Nights in the Fertile Crescent

For the members of the Alaskan based 172nd Striker Brigade, "hot August night" is normally a contradiction in terms. There is nothing

Griffins' Den Continued

hot about the August nights in Fairbanks, Alaska, where the first autumn frost generally arrives within the first two weeks of the month. Following their extra-innings move to Camp Taji, however, the Artic Warriors have been sweating it out alongside the fuelers from Echo Company, 2-4 Aviation. Both, Griffin and Artic Soldiers alike, look forward to the promised reprieve from the heat that typically arrives in the Fertile Crescent at the close of September.

Moving up the ranks: Since our arrival in theatre.

Get to Know 'em: SPC Dennis Goodman, who hails from

Okeechobee, Florida, home of the mighty American Crocodile and the much calmer and slower Manatee, is a two year Army veteran completing his first deployment to Iraq.



Goodman, who is due to PCS to Fort Campbell, KY in the spring, looks forward to spending time with family members in the area. "My wife's originally from Pennsylvania so it (Fort Campbell) was a good middle ground location between our families. Growing up in Florida, I never had the opportunity to witness the changing of the seasons, and, to this date, I've never seen snow other than in pictures. I'm definitely ready to get home and see my wife, who I love and miss greatly." 1LT Lisell and SSG Espada got to take a break and see the relaxing "Green Zone" and we anticipate their comments in next month's newsletter. As for the rest of the POL family, we are doing great, considering the sweltering heat that is a daily oc-

currence.

Distribution Platoon

The Distribution Office is often empty, but if you tour the camp, you will find our Soldiers spread out, picking up pieces of lots of different missions. The DFAC is busy training incoming replacements and feeding twice the number of Soldiers, to include the 172nd. Guard duty continues at a hectic pace but our Soldiers drive on with the mission. Supply is busy preparing equipment to return to Fort Hood

and dividing up what goes and what stays. We would like to say a special "Thank you" to SSG Granger and SSG Wilkins for making a special trip in order to provide the Soldiers in Echo Company with new replacement boots. They were much needed and much appreciated. Thanks also to those of you keeping the "home fires burning" we appreciate and love all of the support you give us.

"All of our Soldiers are staying focused on the mission at hand, but eagerly anticipate spending much needed time with family and friends."

Birthdays

SPC Bryant	1 Aug
SPC Osborne	1 Aug
SPC Goodman	2 Aug
SSG Chatman	2 Aug
SPC Holloman	5 Aug
SPC Boyd	9 Aug
SGT Hernandez	14 Aug
SPC Notyce	15 Aug



SGT Monaghan 17 Aug

SPC Cannon	22 Aug
SGT Hollis	24 Aug
SSG Granger	26 Aug
SGT Carter	31 Aug

Anniversaries

1SG Wilhelm	5 Aug
SFC Drysdale	6 Aug
SSG Chatman	25 Aug

SSG Hampton	27 Aug
SSG Simpson	30 Aug

Message from the Commander

As we wrap up another month here in Iraq, we are slowly approaching redeployment. All of our Soldiers are staying focused on the mission at hand, but eagerly anticipate spending much needed time with family and friends. I hope everyone enjoyed the summer and are looking forward to Labor Day! Continue to support your

fine Soldiers, they are the best Company a commander could ever have!

Take care and God Bless

CPT Chad Smith

1SG Wilhelmy

Edited and written by:

CPT Smith

SGT Reboucas

1LT Taplin

SSG Hurd

SPC Ersek



From the Falcon's Perch

After months of scorching temperatures, the highs have finally dropped back down below 110°F, the lows recently dipping into the 70s, and the feeling of something much bigger than a seasonal change is upon us. As indicated in the previous edition of the Mustang Monthly, Headquarters Company welcomed to Camp Taji the newest addition to the Falcon Team in late August—our new Battalion Com-

mander, LTC Fleckenstein. We welcome the

Fleckenstein family as well and very much look forward to meeting them upon our return to Fort Hood. And speaking of our return, as you may well know, Charlie Company will be paving the way for our redeployment very soon. We have three Headquarters soldiers who arrived with Charlie

"After months of scorching temperatures, the highs have finally dropped back down below 110°F..."

Company last year and will be returning with them as well. We are sad to see SGT Borgman, SGT Ford, and CPT Brandt leave us for now, but we are very excited for them to be reunited with their loved ones.

We also cannot help but to note that their departure marks our own impending departure (not that anyone is counting...).

In soldier news, Sergeant Carter, Battalion Retention NCO, successfully completed the board for promotion to Staff Ser-

geant. SPC Northeran, Battalion Automations Specialist, was awarded an Army Achievement Medal for some recent outstanding work in support of TOC operations. We were also able to send a few soldiers on pass for some well-earned rest. SGT Desir enjoyed several days of touring in Qatar, while SPC Pastran, SGT Walters, SPC Groncki, and PFC Holland were able to relax for four days at the Freedom Rest Facility in the Green Zone of Baghdad. As far as life at



Camp Taji goes, the soldiers of HHC recently put in some very early and

very dirty mornings improving the sandbags around the Pods where we live. At the other end of the day and without all the dirt, many Headquarters soldiers put their voices on display at our weekly Friday night Karaoke which continues to draw larger and larger crowds.

This month we also sent the last group of soldiers on their much-deserved EML. Included in this group was our very own Headquarters Commander, CPT Sanchez.

Falcon new continued

Since her departure, I have had the great privilege of standing in as the acting Headquarters Commander. But even as the last of the September EML group returns, we remain

Our soldiers continue to run 24-hour operations in the Battalion tactical operations center, Battalion Communications Shop, and Com-

keenly aware that the mission continues.

pany Command Post. They continue to pull guard shifts of several varieties, and they continue to conduct their daily business with the utmost professionalism that has characterized their work here for nearly ten months now. At the same time, the extended duration and sometimes back-to-back communications black-outs remind us of the greater mission in which we participate and for which many have made the ultimate sacrifice. While planning and preparing for redeployment, we will continue to remain focused on the fight until relieved of that great responsibility.



"Our soldiers continue to run 24-hour operations. "

CPT Harry Jones

1SG Robert Shinn

Falcons!



THE MUSTANG MONTHLY

Forward Mailing Address
Rank Your Soldier
Your Co/2-4 AVN
Unit 50011
APO AE 09378-0011

Comments or Suggestions???
Email: Amy.Buck@AVBDID4.Army.MIL

SI Pat on the Backs continued...

Glad to Have You Back to Our July Re-enlistees!

Inspirational Thoughts with Chaplain Holmes

God's Value of Marriage

We all know how important our spouse is in our lives. They are our closest friend, our lover, and our co-laborer through life. God has placed a lot of value in our relationship with our spouse. Our love and concern for our spouse is the only relationship that is to rival our love and concern for God. (See I Corinthians 7: 32 -35) An example of God's value comes in the story of Job in the Old Testament.

Job was a righteous man whom God had blessed in many ways. Satan wished to test Job. God says "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Satan destroys his sheep, goats, camels, and even his children. However, Job's wife is preserved. In God's eternal laws, his wife is part of the man himself and so was off limits for Satan to destroy. Certainly, if Satan had been allowed, he would have destroyed Job's wife as he did Job's children. Job remains faithful and does not sin.

Satan returns to God and asks to test again this blameless and upright man. God says, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life." Job is afflicted with painful sores all over his body. However, his wife is preserved. She has no sores. In God's eternal laws, his wife is his life. Satan could no more take Job's life than he could take the life of his wife or even afflict her with any illness.

We need to value our marriage as much as God does. We must use every available means to preserve our marriage. Any and every sacrifice must be made to remain faithful, build trust, and increase our love for one another. God says "I hate divorce" in Malachi 2:16 so we should hate it as well.

Chaplain Thomas Holmes

Iraqi Culture Gram-

Friendship is defined differently by Arabs than by Americans. Arabs adhere to strict, formal rules of behavior and politeness. For an Arab, good manners require that one never flatly refuse a request from a friend. This does not mean that the favor must actually be done, but rather that the response not be stated as a definitive "no." If an Arab friend asks for a favor, it should be done if possible. If the favor is unreasonable, ille-

gal, too difficult, listening carefully, expressing doubt about the outcome, and promising to help is appropriate. Later, an expression of regret and an offer to do another favor is advisable.

Many Arabs like to discuss money and may ask the cost of items or about salaries. As it is unusual in Arab society for an adult to be unmarried and for married couples to have no children, Arabs do not feel it is improper to address such issues. Arabs consider questions about

the women in their families too personal. It is best to ask about the family as a whole, and not specifically inquire about an Arab's wife, sister, or grown daughter.

Sincerely,

CPT Brandon Woods